

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRUSSE 16005 092140Z
ACTION EUR-12

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UNCLAS BRUSSELS 16005

COMMERCE PASS TO GARNITZ DOC/OIM

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BEXP, BE
SUBJ: U.S. FOOTWEAR INDUSTRY--UNDER SECRETARIAL TASK FORCE

REF: STATE 263324

1. UP TO PRESENT, TWICE YEARLY SHOE-SHOW AT CENTRE ROGIER INTERNATIONAL IN BRUSSELS IS VIRTUALLY SOLE VEHICLE FOR SHOE INDUSTRY PROMOTION IN BELGIUM. THIS TWO DAY SHOW, WHICH IS NEXT SCHEDULED MARCH 12/13, 1978 AND SEPTEMBER 17/18, 1978, HAS BEEN IN DECLINE FOR SEVERAL YEARS HOWEVER. MANY IMPORTANT EXHIBITORS HAVE NOW ESTABLISHED PERMANENT SHOWROOMS AT INTERNATIONAL TRADE MART IN BRUSSELS. MR. MICHEL, SHOE-SHOW (NOW SHOE-EXPO) ORGANIZER, WARNS US THAT FAIR MAY BE CANCELLED BECAUSE OF LESSENING OF BUYER INTEREST. OTHER SOURCES TELL US THAT THIS SHOW IS "WORTH VERY LITTLE". ACCORDINGLY, WE RECOMMEND AGAINST ANY US PARTICIPATION. WE ARE HOWEVER POUCHING APPLICATION FORMS AND INFO ON SHOW TO COMMERCE.

2. OTHER CONSUMER GOODS FAIRS IN BELGIUM SUCH AS BRUSSELS INTERNATIONAL FAIR ARE NOT APPROPRIATE VEHICLES FOR US FOOTWEAR INDUSTRY.

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3. MR. VERDUYN, SECRETARY OF CHAMBER OF SHOE RETAILERS, INFORMS US THAT BELGIAN BUYERS REGULARLY TRAVEL TO DUSSELDORF AND MILAN (AND/OR BOLOGNA) SHOE EXHIBITS AND SHOWS. SOME BUYERS WHO SPECIALIZE IN FRENCH PRODUCT LINES VISIT PARIS SHOWROOMS. HE CONFIRMED ALSO THAT MORE USE IS BEING MADE OF BRUSSELS INTERNATIONAL TRADE MART WHICH GOT OFF TO SLOW START SEVERAL YEARS AGO BUT WHICH IS AT

PRESENT OF GROWING IMPORTANCE IN PROMOTION OF WEARING
APPAREL AND FURNISHINGS. INTERNATIONAL TRADE MART HOWEVER
IS OF INTEREST TO US FIRMS WHICH WISH TO SET UP MORE OR
LESS PERMANENT EXHIBITS. WE WILL HOWEVER EXAMINE THIS
ANGLE IN MORE DETAIL AND IF PROMISING WILL REPORT FURTHER.
CHAMBERS

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